General Assembly

Distr.: General
22 February 2005

Fifty-ninth session
Agenda item 85 (*c*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/59/483/Add.3)*]

59/233. Natural disasters and vulnerability

The General Assembly,

Recalling its decision 57/547 of 20 December 2002 and its resolution 58/215 of 23 December 2003,

Taking into account the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development[1] and the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development,[2] adopted by the World Summit, held in Johannesburg, South Africa, from 26 August to 4 September 2002,

Recognizing the need to continue to develop an understanding of, and to address, socio-economic activities that exacerbate the vulnerability of societies to natural disasters, to build and further strengthen community capacity to cope with disaster risks and to enhance resilience against hazards associated with disasters,

Noting that the global environment continues to suffer degradation, adding to economic and social vulnerabilities, in particular in developing countries,

Taking into account the various ways and forms in which all countries, in particular the more vulnerable countries, are affected by severe natural hazards such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions and extreme weather events such as heat waves, severe droughts, floods and storms, and the El Niño/La Niña events, which have global reach,

Recognizing that the impact of natural disasters upon vulnerable countries is, among others, a significant obstacle to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3] in particular those relating to poverty eradication and environmental sustainability,

Expressing deep concern at the recent increases in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events and associated natural disasters in some regions of the

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[1] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[2] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[3] See resolution 55/2.

world and their substantial economic, social and environmental impacts, in particular upon developing countries in those regions,

Taking into account that extreme weather events and associated natural disasters and their reduction must be dealt with in a coherent and effective manner,

Expressing deep concern at the increasing negative impact of severe natural hazards, including earthquakes, extreme weather events and associated natural disasters, which continues to hinder social and economic progress, in particular in developing countries,

Stressing the need to develop and implement risk-reduction strategies, including disaster preparedness, mitigation and early warning systems at all levels, and to integrate them, where appropriate, into national development plans, in particular through the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, so as to enhance the resilience of populations to disasters and reduce the risks to them, their livelihoods, the social and economic infrastructure and environmental resources,

Recognizing that the development of stronger institutions, mechanisms and capacities, including at the community level, that can systematically build resilience to hazards and disasters is essential to reducing the risks and vulnerability of populations to disasters,

Noting the need for international cooperation to increase the capacity of countries to respond to the negative impacts of all natural hazards, including earthquakes, extreme weather events and associated natural disasters, particularly in developing countries,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction,[4] in particular section II, on natural disasters and vulnerability;

2. *Urges* the international community to continue to address ways and means, including through cooperation and technical assistance, to reduce the adverse effects of natural disasters, including those caused by extreme weather events, in particular in vulnerable developing countries, through the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and encourages the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction to continue its work in this regard;

3. *Stresses* the importance for the World Conference on Disaster Reduction to conclude the review of the Yokohama Strategy for a Safer World: Guidelines for Natural Disaster Prevention, Preparedness and Mitigation and its Plan of Action,[5] with a view to updating the guiding framework on disaster reduction for the twenty-first century, and to identify specific activities aimed at ensuring the implementation of relevant provisions of the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development[2] on vulnerability, risk assessment and disaster management, bearing in mind the vital importance of addressing the adverse effects of natural disasters in efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the United Nations Millennium Declaration;[3]

4. *Emphasizes* that the World Conference on Disaster Reduction should, within its mandate as set out in General Assembly resolution 58/214 of

[4] A/59/228.

[5] A/CONF.172/9, chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

23 December 2003, make concrete recommendations to reduce the risks and vulnerabilities of all countries, in particular developing countries, in relation to disasters, including through the provision of technical and financial assistance, as well as through the strengthening of International Strategy for Disaster Reduction national platforms for disaster reduction or the establishment of institutional mechanisms, including at the regional level, where appropriate;

5. *Encourages* Governments, through their respective International Strategy for Disaster Reduction national platforms and national focal points for disaster reduction, in cooperation with the United Nations system and other stakeholders, to strengthen capacity-building in the most vulnerable regions, to enable them to address the socio-economic factors that increase vulnerability, and to develop measures that will enable them to prepare for and cope with natural disasters, including those associated with earthquakes and extreme weather events, and encourages the international community to provide effective assistance to developing countries in this regard;

6. *Also encourages* the Inter-Agency Task Force for Disaster Reduction to continue to enhance the coordination of activities to promote disaster reduction and to make available to the relevant United Nations entities information on options for natural disaster reduction, including severe natural hazards and extreme weather-related disasters and vulnerabilities;

7. *Stresses* the importance of close cooperation and coordination among Governments, the United Nations system, other organizations, regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other partners as appropriate, taking into account the need for the development of disaster management strategies, including the effective establishment of early warning systems, where appropriate, while taking advantage of all available resources and expertise for that purpose;

8. *Encourages* the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[6] and the parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[7] to continue to address the adverse effects of climate change, especially in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable, in accordance with the provisions of the Convention, and also encourages the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to continue to assess the adverse effects of climate change on the socio-economic and natural disaster reduction systems of developing countries;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the implementation of the present resolution in a separate section of his report on the implementation of the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction, and decides to consider the issue of natural disasters and vulnerability at that session, under the sub-item entitled "International Strategy for Disaster Reduction" of the item entitled "Sustainable development".

75th plenary meeting
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[6] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[7] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

United Nations A/RES/59/234

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Agenda item 85 (*d*)

Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Second Committee (A/59/483/Add.4)*]

59/234. Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolution 54/222 of 22 December 1999, its decision 55/443 of 20 December 2000 and its resolutions 56/199 of 21 December 2001, 57/257 of 20 December 2002 and 58/243 of 23 December 2003 and other resolutions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

Recalling also the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[1] including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Recalling further the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,[2] the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[3] the Delhi Ministerial Declaration on Climate Change and Sustainable Development, adopted by the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change at its eighth session, held in New Delhi from 23 October to 1 November 2002,[4] and the outcome of the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties held in Milan, Italy, from 1 to 12 December 2003,[5]

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[2] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August–4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[3] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[4] FCCC/CP/2002/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.8.

[5] FCCC/CP/2003/6/Add.1 and 2.

Noting the review of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[6]

Remaining deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries and small island developing States, face increased risks from the negative impacts of climate change,

Noting that one hundred and eighty-nine States and one regional economic integration organization have ratified the Convention,

Noting also that, to date, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[7] has attracted one hundred and twenty-eight ratifications, including from parties mentioned in annex I to the Convention, which account for 61.6 per cent of emissions,

Noting further the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, inter alia, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries,

Recalling the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[8] in which Heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol, preferably by the tenth anniversary of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in 2002, and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,[9]

Taking note of the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change on the work of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention,[10]

1. *Calls upon* States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;[1]

2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[7] strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

3. *Notes also* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol welcome its ratification by the Russian Federation, which satisfies the requirements for the Kyoto Protocol to enter into force;

4. *Encourages* States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to continue their preparations for its entry into force;

5. *Notes with interest* the preparations undertaken for the implementation of the flexible mechanisms established by the Kyoto Protocol;

6. *Takes note* of the decisions adopted by the Conference of the Parties at its ninth session,[5] and calls for their implementation;

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[6] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April–6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[7] FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1, decision 1/CP.3, annex.

[8] See resolution 55/2.

[9] Ibid., para. 23.

[10] A/59/197, sect. I.

7. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[11] and the Convention on Biological Diversity,[12] and encourages cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

8. *Invites* the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

9. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

10. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixtieth session the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind".

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[11] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

[12] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.